

Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Citizens Medal to
Bernice Young Jones
February 26, 1996

The President. I want to begin, Bernice, by welcoming members of your family and your friends here, and we're especially glad to have Senator Bumpers and Congressman Hutchinson come.

I learned this morning something I did not know, that this is your first trip to Washington. Well, to have managed to live as many years as you have—

Ms. Jones. Ninety. [Laughter]

The President. —without ever coming to Washington, that alone is justification for this award. [Laughter]

Ms. Jones. And that's my sister, and it's her first trip, and she's 92.

Hillary Clinton. Is that right?

The President. Well, neither one of you look it, and we're glad to have you.

Hillary Clinton. That's probably why they look so good. [Laughter]

The President. Let me say that for me, personally, this is a great pleasure because I know very well of the extraordinary work you have done for health care in Arkansas, for education,

and of course, the center you established in your name and your late husband's name for families in Springdale. The things that you have done and stood for and tried to help are the things that all of us in America should be trying to advance. And you are a shining example for philanthropy in our country.

I can only hope that every State will find someone like you to help do what needs to be done. And it is for that reason that I wanted to give you this President's Citizens Medal. And I'm very glad you decided to take leave of your very good policy and at least one time come to Washington, DC. [Laughter]

Ms. Jones. Thank you so much. I appreciate it for myself, my family, my friends, my wonderful Springdale, and Arkansas.

The President. I'd like to ask my military aide now to read the citation.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Teleconference Remarks to the National Emergency Management
Association
February 26, 1996

The President. Hello.

Federal Emergency Management Agency Director James Lee Witt. Mr. President, good morning.

The President. Good morning, James Lee, how are you?

Mr. Witt. I'm fine, sir. We have a lot of State directors in the room, probably about 200 people here, and we're very appreciative for you to call in.

The President. Well, I'm delighted to do it, and I wish I were there with you.

Mr. Witt. We do, too. [Laughter]

The President. You haven't seen Washington today—it just depends—I wish I were there

with you even more than you wish I were there. [Laughter]

Let me begin by saying that I can imagine that for many of you, having the chance to come to the conference is a welcome relief from being out there on the front lines of disasters in your home States. This has been a tough, a cold, a wet, even a miserable winter for people in a lot of places and many of you are still in response or early recovery from the floods and the blizzards. We also, as I'm sure you know, have these terrible fires in some parts of our country. We've had more than 3 times as many disasters declared in the first 6 weeks of this